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A COLLECTION
OF
S V N D R Y PETITIONS
Presented to the
K I N G S
Most Excellent Majestie.

AS ALSO
To the two most Honourable Houses, now
Assembled in PARLIAMENT,

AND OTHERS.
Already signed by most of the Gentry, Ministers, and Free-
holders of severall Counties, in the behalfe of Episco-
pacy, Liturgie, and supportation of Church Reve-
nues, and suppression of Schismatics.

Collected by a faithfull Lover of the Church, for the comfort of
the dejected Clergie, and all moderately affected Protestants.

Published by His Majesties speciall command.
Sir Thomas Astle, Secretary.

Page 34 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but you
must tread downe with your feet the residue also. Therefore thus saith the Lord
God, because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the dis-
eased with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad: therefore will I
save my flocke, and they shall be no more a prey; and I will judge betwene Car-
tell and Cattel And I will set up one Shepheard over them, and he shall feed them,
even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their Shepheard, I the
Lord will be their God, and my servant David a Prince among them. I the Lord
have spoken it.

London Printed for Thomas Bankes. 1642.

A COLLECTION
OF
SANDRY PETITIONS

presented to the

KINGS

Most Excellent Majesty

AS ALSO

To the two most Honourable Houses of



Printed by J. G. Smith, at the British Museum, 1831.

London Printed for J. G. Smith, 1831.

C. Rex.

OVr will and command is, and we do hereby authorise you forthwith to print, publish, and disperse a certaine booke intituled, *A Collection of the Petitions of divers Counties of this our Kingdome, subscribed by the Gentry, Ministers, and free-holders of those Counties, on behalfe of Episcopacie, the Liturgy, and Church-governement, and for the establishing our rights and the Liberty of the Subject. And for so doing this shal be your Warrant.*

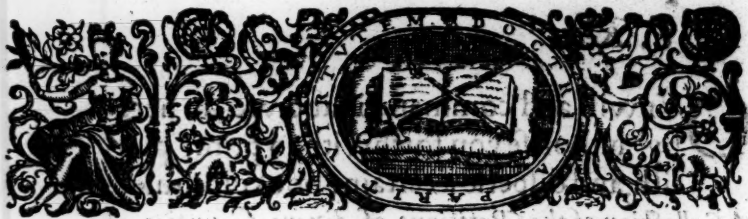
Given at our Court at Torke, the 20 of May, 1642

The Index of the Petitions.

Chesire, Oxford and Cambridge Universities,
Nottingham, Huntington, Somerset, Rutland,
Cheshire, Colledges, Halls, &c. Excester Dioces,
Staffordshire, Diocesse of Canterbury, Six Counties
of North-Wales, Lancashire, Cornwall, Kent, Ox-
ford County, Cornwall, Hereford.

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The



The Collector to the Reader.

READER,

L Et me put thee in minde (as these times do me) of a special law in that singular pattern of a wel disposed state, Sparta. So fancible were they of the ill effects of innovations in government; that whosoever proposed a new Law, presented himselfe with a halter about his neck, his head payd the trespassse of a new invented prejudice. But Oh, *Quantum mutantur tempora, quantum nos!* So rare a gift hath the illuminated fancies of this all-knowing age, That old women without Spectacles can discover Popish plots, yong men and Prentices assume to regulate the rebellion in Ireland Sea-men and Mariners reforme the House of Peeres: poor men, potters and Laborers spy out a malignant party and discipline them The Country Clouted shoos renew the decayed trade of the city. The Cöbler patch up a Religion: and all these petition for a translation both of Church and State, with so little feare of the halter, that they would think themselves neglected, if they had not thanks for their care of the Republique. Only he that desires the ratification of an old Law, or of a long ruled Ecclesiastick government, looks as if the halter were his share: & though there be thirty thousand hands subscribed to it, 'Tis odds not one of all those dares prefer a petition to that purpose: O, *Quis pueri quod non pueri facies quod pueri infelix linas.* O what a shame is it, That an ignorant Secretary shall covertly draw subscribers out of blind zeale to loose papers, and thole to be annex to some embryon yet unhatched, and delivered in the name of a County with confidence, as if a Ring of a shire shall perhaps smother the true child, and dares not own it. That a few Innovators shall bee able to summon to Blacke heath, Southwark, and S. Georges fields thousands of credulous persons, with implicit faiths to goe along with petitions, shall bee shewed them when they come there, for the alteration of lawes and government: And the resolution of an Assises or feillions of Iustices, published in all parishes, signed by al the freeholders in a county, for the supportion of lawes and government, shall not produce one Pa-

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triot to present the unanimous desires of a county : yet it falls out often so, when single hearted men are encountered by a faction, each man thinketh hee stands alone, unassured of a second: when ten of the other confederated make more noyse than 1000 silent men. Episcopacie and Liturgy are both legally planted, at this time both violently assaulted : the question is, whether the battery or the defence be the stronger: the one side chargeth furiously, the other suffers silently, patiently, and a reserved strength oft masters a violent. But each Orthodox son of the Church thinks himself in *Eliab's* case, that he alone is left of all the Prophets, and alas what can he do ? And perhaps thou my reader art one of them: Courage man. The same God that taught him to know he had reserved seven thousand that had never bowed their knees to *Baal*, when hee opens thy eyes, can shew thee not seven, but seventy times seven thousand true Protestants, that will lend their hands and hearts to uphold that true Apostolick order, this blessed form of divine service. The busines is, 'tis a hard time, every man is afraid to breake his shins by being formost. But the ice is broke already : this collection of so many sleeping petitions will shew every County that the way is open. And since noyse and number are taken into consideration, the forwardnesse of the assailants wil, I beleeve, put shame upon the defendants to be so far behind. The Judges being honorable, and impartially receiving the arguments on both sides, I presume none will discover a distrust of a faire acceptance, or betray a trust (out of a personall respect) by detaining such petitions as the counties have committed into their hands. If all such as are already signed see the light, I am sure this volume will be a large one, & the number and quality of the defendants, as much overway the opponents ; as their arguments drawne from the lawes of God and man, will out-weigh the motives of those, who onely will, because they wil: as ift were cause enough to overthrow establishd lawes, that they have desired it, though they shew no reason for it. But if all other counties, all true protestants with like liberty express their affections, the distractions of the Church will be quickly settled. To that good work I have lent my hand, by lending thee and the world this light.

Farewell.

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A Petition delivered in to the Lords Spirituall and Temporall, by Sir *Thomas Aston* Baronet, from the County palatine of Chester, concerning Episcopacie.

To the high and honorable Court of Parliament. The Nobilitie, Knights, Gentry, Ministers, Freeholders and Inhabitants of the County Palatine of Chester, whose names are subscribed in the severall schedules hereto annexed.

Humbly sheweth :

That whereas divers petitions have lately bin carried about this County, against the present forme of Church government (and the hands of many persons of ordinary quality solicited to the same, with pretence to be presented to this honorable Assembly) which we conceiving not to much to aym at reformation, as absolute innovation of government, and such as must give a great advantage to the adversaries of our Religion, we held it our duty to disavow them all, and humbly pray, that we incur no mis-consequence, if any such clamors have without our privy assent, the name of the County.

We, as others, are sensible of the common grievances of the kingdome, and have just cause to rejoyce at, and acknowledge with thankfulness, the pious care already taken for the suppressing of the growth of popery, the better supply of able Ministers, and the removing of all Innovation; and we doubt not, but in your great wisdoms you will regulate the rigour of Ecclesiasticall Courts, to suit with the temper of our lawes, and the nature of Free-men.

Yet when we consider that Bishops were instituted in the time of the Apostles; That they were the great lights of the Church in all the generall counsels; That so many of them sowed the seeds of religion in their bloods, and rescued Christianity from utter extirpation in the Primitive heathen persecutions; That to them we owe the redemption of the purity of the Gospell we now professe from Romish corruption; That many of them for the propagation
of

of the truth, became such glorious Martyrs; That divers of them lately and yet living with us, have been so great assertors of our religion against its common enemy of Rome; And that their government hath bene so long approved, so of established by the common and statute lawes of this kingdome; And as yet nothing in thir doctrine (generally taught) dissonant from the Word of God, or the Articles ratified by Law. In this case to call their government, a perpetuall vassalage, an intollerable bondage; And (*prima facie & inaudita altera parte*) to pray the removeall of them, or (as in some of their Petitions) to seeke the utter dissolution and ruine of their Offices (as Antichristian) wee cannot conceive to relish of justice or charity, nor can we joyne with them.

But on the contrary, when we consider the tenor of such writings, as in the name of Petitions, are spread amongst the common people; the tenents preached publicly in Pulpits, and the contents of many printed Pamphlets, warning amongst us; all of them dangerously exciting a disobedience to the established form of government, and their severall intimations of the desire of the power of the Keyes, and that their Congregations may execute Ecclesiasticall censures within themselves, we cannot but expresse our just feares, that their desire is to introduce an absolute Innovation of Presbyteriall government, whereby we who are now governed by the Canon and Civill Lawes, dispensed by twenty-six Ordinaries (easily responsall to Parliaments for any deviation from the rule of Law) conceive we should become exposed to the mere arbitrary government of a numerous Presbytery, who together with their ruling Elders, will arise to neere forty thousand Church governours, and with their adherents, must neere beare so great a sway in the Common-wealth, that if future inconvenience shall be found in that government, we humbly offer to consideration, how these shall be reducible by Parliaments, how consistent with a Monarchy, and how dangerously conducing to an Anarchy, which wee have just cause to pray against, as fearing the consequences would prove the utter losse of learning and Lawes, which must necessarily produce an extermination of Nobility, Gentry, and Order, if not of Religion.

With what vehemency of spirit, these things are profecated, and how plausibly such popular infusions spread as incline to a parity, we held it our duty to repropose to this Honourable Assembly; And humbly pray, That some such present course be taken, as in your wisdoms shall be thought fit, to suppress the future, dispersing of such dangerous discontents amongst the common people. We having great cause to feare, that of all the distempers that at present threaten the welfare of this State, there is none more worthy the mature and grave consideration of this Honourable Assembly, then to stop the Torrent of such spirits before they swell beyond the bounds of government: Then wee doubt not but his Majestie persevering in his gracious inclination to heare the complaints, and relieve the grievances of his Subjects in frequent Parliaments, it will so unite the head and the body, so indissolubly cement the affections of

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his people to our royall Sovereigne, that without any other change of government, He can never want Revenue, nor we justice.

We have presumed to annex a Copy of a Petition (or Libell) dispersed, and certain positions preacht in this Countie, which we conceive, imply matter of dangerous consequence, to the peace both of Church and State. All which we humbly submit to your great judgements, praying they may be read,

And shall ever pray, &c.

Subscribed to this Petition.

Four Noble men.

Knight Baronets Knights and Esquires, fourscore and odde.

Divines, threescore and ten.

Gentlemen three hundred and odde.

Free-holders, and other Inhabitants, above six thousand:

All of the same County.



To the High and Honourable Court of PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of the University of OXFORD,

Sheweth,

THat whereas the Universitie hath beene informed of severall Petitions concerning the present government of this Church, and maintenance of the Clergy, which have of late beene exhibited to this Honourable Assembly; We could not but thinke our selves bound in duty to God, and this whole Nation, charity to our selves and successors, who have, and are like to have more then ordinary interest in any resolution that shall be taken concerning Church-affaires, in all humility to desire the continuance of that forme of Government, which is now established here, and hath beene preserved in some of the Easterne and Westerne Churches, in a continued succession of *Bishops*, downe from the very Apostles to this present

present time; the like whereof cannot be affirmed of any other forme of Government in any Church. Upon which consideration, and such other motives as have beene already represented to this Honourable Parliament from other persons and places (with whom we concur) in behalfe of *Episcopacy*, We earnestly desire, that you would protect that Ancient and *Apostolicall Order* from ruine or diminution.

And become farther suiters for the continuance of those pious Foundations of *Cathedral Churches*, with their Lands and Revenues,

As dedicate to the Service and Honour of God, soone after the Plantation of Christianity in the *English Nation*:

As thought fit and usefull to be preserved for that end, when the Nurseries of Superstition were demolished, and so continued in the last and best times, since the blessed Reformation, under King *Edward 6.* *Queene Elizabeth*, and King *James*; Princes renowned through the world for their piety and wisdom:

As approved and confirmed by the Lawes of this Land, ancient and moderne:

As the principall outward motive and encouragement of all Students, especially in Divinity; and the fittest reward of some deepe and eminent Schollars:

As producing or nourishing in all Ages, many Godly and Learned Men, who have most strongly asserted the truth of that Religion we professe, against the many fierce oppositions of our adversaries of *Rome*.

As affording a competent portion in an ingenious way to many younger Brothers of good Parentage, who devote themselves to the Ministry of the Gospel:

As the onely meanes of subsistence to a multitude of Officers and other Ministers, who with their Families depend upon them, and are wholly maintained by them:

As the maine Authors or Upholders of diverse Schooles, Hospitals, Highways, Bridges, and other publique and pious Workes:

As speciall causes of much profit and advantage to those Cities where they are situate, not onely by relieving their poore, and keeping convenient Hospitality, but by occasioning a frequent resort of Strangers from other parts, to the great benefit of all Tradersmen, and Inhabitants in those places:

As the goodly Monuments of our Predecessors Piety, and present Honour of this Kingdome in the eye of Forreigne Nations.

As the chiefe support of many thousand Families of the Laity, who enjoy faire estates from them in a free way:

As yeelding a constant and ample revenue to the Crowne:

And as by which many of the learned Professors in our University are maintained.

The subversion or alienation whereof must (as we conceive) not onely be attended with such consequences as will redound to the scandall of many well-affected to our Religion, but open the mouthes of our Adversaries, and of Posterity against us, and is likely in time to draw after it harder conditions upon a considerable part of the Laity; an universall cheapnesse and contempt upon the Clergy, a lamentable drooping and defection of industry and knowledge in the *Universities*; which is easie to fore-see, but will be hard to remedy.

May it therefore please this Honourable Assembly, upon these and such other Considerations as Your great Wisdoms shall suggest, to take such pious care for the continuance of these Religious Houses, and their Revennue, according to the best intentions of their Founders, as may be to the most furtherance of Gods glory and service, the honour of this Church and Nation, the advancement of Religion and Learning, the encouragement of the modest hopes and honest endeavours of many hundred Students in the Universities,

Who doe and shall ever pray, &c.

*Dat. Anno Dom. Millesimo sexcenti quad' primo è Dame Convocationis in celabri
Conveniu Doctorum ac Magistrorum, omnibus & singulis assensibus.*



**Honoratissimis viris Equitibus, Civibus, &
Burgensibus Supremæ Curie Parliamentoriæ
SENATORIBUS Consultissimis.**

Summa cum Demissione.

Senatores Honoratissimi,

N*On veremur ne volventibus tanta negotia molesti sumus Academia
Cantabrigiensis, cum nihil sit aut ad Religionem certius, aut ad splen-
dorem nemini excelsius, quam suscipere Literarum clientelam. In quo
studio, cum singularis animi vestri propensio semper eluxerit, tum nul-
la in*

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la in re magis possit eminere, quam si Ecclesie honestamenta ea, quæ sub optimis Regibus iam diu oporuerunt, indelibata suavitati

Non enim agitur quævis Academiæ, non ætatis causa; nam nec industria poterit non relanguescere, nec bona indoles alii, atque augeri, nec vota parentum non in irritum eadere, nisi spe non vana suffulciantur. Quam præmaturum putemus bonis artibus occasum imminere, si stipendium idem Militi sit quod Imperatori? Sunt qui expediendus Scholasticorum ambagibus, evolvendis antiquorum Patrum monumentis, expurganda feci Romanæ, velut Augiæ stabulo, se totius impenderunt; nec aliam mercedem prensant, quam in Ecclesia Cathedrali tandem aliquando quasi in portu conquiscescere; ita sit, ut quod ignavis asylum incitiæ est, id candidioribus ingeniis pro stimulo sit ad optima persequenda, nec æquitas iudiciorum vestrorum ferret, improbitatem nonnullorum in publicam calamitatem redundare. Impetigo Romana quam amplam tum sit vestra videbitur se diffundendi materiam, cum non sit nisi imbellis adversarios habitura; neque enim certamini, vacare possunt, qui id unice agunt, ut in rebus conscientibus suadent; etiam enim percontescere nobis videmur undam atque inanevnam Academiæ, & antiquam paupertatem quasi præludio perhorrescimus: nec vestra progenies non aliquando ventura est in tantarum miserarum partes. Quin itaque Senatores Amplissimi, per spes parentum, per illecebras industriz, per subsidia finis & ornamenta pietatis, per vincula, nervos, & firmamenta literarum, velitis splendorem Ecclesie, qui longissimis usque temporibus, ad nostra tempora deductus est, auctoritate vestra communit. Sed quia Lingua Nativa dolores & desideria sua feliciter exprimit, annexam Literis Petitionem brevibus verbis expressit.

Honori vestro Deditissimi

Præcancellarius, reliquisque ceteris

Academie Cantabrigiæ.

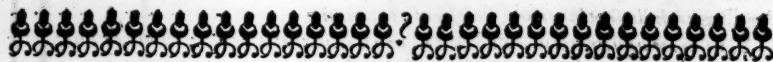
Datæ & frequent. Conventu

nostro Cantabrigiæ. Idem Idem

Aprilis. 1641.

Lesla 12. Maii. 1641.

To



To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesſes
of the Houſe of COMMONS aſſembled in Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Vniuerſity of CAMBRIDGE.

Sheweth,

THat Your Petitioners having heard of diuers ſuggeſtions offered to this Honourable Court by way of Remonſtrance, tending to the ſubverſion of *Cathedrall Churches*, and alienation of thoſe *Lands*, by which they are ſupported, being the ancient Inheritance of the Church, founded and beſtowed by the Religious bounty of many *Famous and Renowned Kings and Princes of this Land*, and other *Benefactors*, both of the *Clergy and Laity*, and eſtabliſhed and confirmed unto them by the *Lawes* of this Kingdome, and ſo accordingly have beene employed to the advancement of *Learning*, the encouragement of *Students*, and proſperments of *Learned men*; beſides many other pious and charitable *Uſes*.

May it pleaſe this Honourable Court, out of their great wiſdome, add tender care for the cheriſhing of Learning, and furtherance of the ſtudies and paines of thoſe who have, and doe devote themſelves to the ſervice of the Church, graciouſly to protect and ſecure thoſe Religious Foundations from ruine and alienation; and withall to take order that they may be reduc'd to the due obſervation of their Statutes, and that all Innovations and Abuses, which have by ſome mens miſcarriages crept in, may be reformed, that ſo the Students of our Univerſitie, which by the preſent feares, both are, and will be much ſaddened and dejected, may be the better incited to purſue their Studies with alacritie, and the places themſelves diſpoſed to the moſt ſervicable and deſerving men, according to their firſt Inſtitution.

And your Petitioners as in duty bound,
ſhall ever pray, &c.

To

To the Honourable House of Commons now assembled in the High Courts of Parli-
ament, sheweth, that the petition of all the Knights, Gentlemen, Clergie, and Commons within
the County of Nottingham, doth shew, that as touching the alteration of the Church-Govern-
ment, Humbly shewing,

That whereas we are informed, that a Petition, together with a Re-
monstrance, hath in the Name of this County, been heretofore pre-
sented to this Honourable House, for the alteration in Church-Gov-
ernment.

We do humbly crave leave to certifie your Honours, that the same was done
without our knowledge, or consent, and that we do hereby dis-avow the same.
And with the like humility, do desire That the long established Government of
the Church may still continue, and that the abuses and errors of some particular
persons may not cause the alteration of the Ancient Government; but rather, that
such persons should suffer according to their Demerits. And we likewise humbly
crave, the *Book of Common Prayer*, by Law established, may continue in force;
with such alteration (if there be cause) as to your Honours wisdoms shall seeme
meet.

And as in duty bound, We shall daily pray, &c.

*Subscribed by one Viscount, five Knights, above a hundred Gentlemen of quality,
all the Clergie of the County, and above six thousand Commoners, being all of
them Communicants.*

*The Remonstrance and Petition of the County of Huntington, the Knights, Gen-
tlemen, Clergie, Free-holders, and inhabitants.*

- To the Right Honourable the Lords, and Commons assembled in Parliament, for
the continuance of the Church-Government, and Divine Service, or Booke of
Common Prayer. Presented to the House of Peeres by my Lord Privy Seale,
the eight of December, 1641.*

We humbly shew,

That whereas many attempts have been practised, and divers Petitions
from severall Counties, and other places within the Kingdom, framed
and penned in a close and subtil manner, to import more than is at
first discernable by any ordinary eye, or that was imparted to those
who signed the same, have been carried about to most places against the present
form and frame of Church-government, and divine Service, or Common Prayers,
and the hands of many persons of ordinary quality solicited to the same, with
pretence to be presented to this Honourable assembly in Parliament, and under
colour of removing some Innovations lately crept into the Church and worship
of God, and reforming some abuses in the Ecclesiasticall Courts, which we con-
ceiving and fearing not so much to aime at the taking away of the said Innova-
tions, and reformation of abuses, as tending to an absolute Innovation of Church-
government, and subversion of that Order and Forme of Divine Service which
hath happily continued amongst us ever since the Reformation of Religion: Our

of a tender and zealous regard hereto, we have thought it our duty, and only to disavow al such Petitions, but also to manifest our publike affections, and desires to continue the Forme of Divine Service, and Common Prayers, and the present Government of the Church, as the same have been continued since the first Reformation, and stand so established by the Laws and Statutes of this Kingdom.

For when we consider that the Forme of Divine Service expressed and contained in the Book of Common Prayer, was with great care, piety, and sincerity, revised and reduced from all former corruptions and Romish superstitions, by those holy and selected Instruments of the Reformation of Religion within this Church, and was by them restored to its first purity, according as it was instituted and practised in the Primitive times, standeth confirmed, established, and injoynd by Act of Parliament, and Royall Injunctions, and hath ever since had the generall approbation of the godly, and a publike use and continuance within this Church. And that Bishops were instituted, and have had their being and continuance ever since the first planting of Christian Religion amongst us, and the rest of the Christian world, that they were the lights and glorious Lamps of Gods Church, that so many of them sowed the seeds of Christian Religion in their bloods, which they willingly powred out therefore, that by them Christianity was rescued and preserved from utter extirpation in the fierce and most cruel Persecutions of Pagan Emperors, that to them we owe the redemption of the purity of the Gospel, and the Reformation of the Religion we now profess, from Romish corruption, that many of them for the propagation of that Truth became glorious Martyrs, leaving unto us an holy example, and an honourable remembrance of their faith and Christian fortitude, that divers of them lately, and yet living with us, have been so great Assertors and Companions of our Religion against the common Enemy of Rome, and that their Governemts hath been so ancient, so long approved, and so often established by the Laws and Statutes of this Kingdom, and as yet nothing in their Doctrine (generally taught) dissonant from the Word of God, or the Articles established by Law, and that most of them are of singular learning and piety. In this case to call the Forme of Divine Service and Common Prayers, Erronious, Popish, Superstitious, Idolatrous, and Blasphemous, and to call the Government by Bishops, a perpetual yallage, and intollerable bondage, and at the first step, and before the parties concerned be heard, to pray the present removall of them, or the utter dissolution & extirpation of them, their Courts, and their Officers, as Antichristian and Diabolical, we cannot conceive to favour or relish of piety, justice, or charity, nor can we joyne with them therein, but rather humbly pray a reformation of the abuses, and punishment of the offenders, but not the ruine or abolition of the Innocent.

Now on the contrary, When we consider the tenour of such writings, as in the name of Petitions are spread amongst the common people, the contents of many printed Pamphlets swarming at London, and over all Countreies, the Sermons preached publicly in Pulpits, and other private places, and the bitter invectives drunged, and commonly spoken by many unlearned persons, all of them shewing a reverence and love of the present Government of the Church, and

and Divine Service, or Common Prayer, dangerously shaken, and referred to the established forme of Government and Church Service, then severall innovations of the desire of the power of the keyes, and that their congregations may be independent, and may execute Ecclesiasticall censures within themselves, whereby many Sects, and severall and contrary opinions will soon grow and arise, whereby great divisions and horrible factions will soon ensue thereupon, to the breach of that union, which is the sacred band and preservation of the common peace of Church and State: their detemporary desires and bold assuming to themselves the liberty of conscience to introduce into the Church whatsoever they affect, and to refuse and oppose all things which themselves shall dislike, and what they dislike must not onely to themselves but also to all others be scandalous and burdensome, and must be cried out upon as great and unsupportable grievances, yea although the things in themselves be never so indifferent, or never so long continuance in use and practice, and never so much desired and affected of others, so that where three or four of them be in a Parrish, though five hundred others desire the use and continuance of things long used, all must be altered or taken away as scandalls and grievances for these three or four, though to the offence of many others, and whatsoever they will have introduced, must be imposed upon all others, and must by all be admitted without scandall or offence, whereby multitudes of goodly and well affected people are in some things deprived and deprived of what they desire and take comfort in, and have had a long and lawfull use and practice of, and other things imposed upon them against their wills and liking, as if no account were to be made of them, or no liberty of conscience were left unto them: which bold attempts of some few to arrogate to themselves, and to exercise over all others, what high presumption is it, and how great a tyranny may it prove over the mindes and consciences of good men. The great increase of late of Schismatics and Sectaries, and of persons not onely separating and sequestering themselves from publicke Assemblies at Common Prayer and Divine Service, but also opposing, and tumultuously interrupting others in the performance thereof in the publicke Congregation, the frequent and many Conventicles held amongst them, and their often meetings at all publicke conventions of Assemblies, Sessions, Faires, Markets, and other publicke Assemblies, their earnest labouring to sollicite and draw the people to them, and the generall correspondence held amongst them to advance their ends herein. Of these things we cannot but take notice, and must needs expresse our just fears, that their desires and endeavours are to work some great change and mutations in the present forme of the Church Government, and in the Forme of the publicke Worship of God and Divine Service, and Common Prayers.

Of the common grievances of the Kingdome, we as others, have bene and are sensible, and doe profess that we have just cause with joy and comfort to remember, and with thankfulness to acknowledge the pious care which is already taken for the suppressing of the growth of Popery, the better supply of able and painfull Ministers, and the removing of all Innovation, and we doubt not but in your great Wisesomes you will regulate the rigour and exor-

...s, and the nature and condition of Free-men: And we hope and humbly pray, that the present Forme of Church Government, and of Church Service, and Common Prayers now established by the Statutes of this Kingdome shall be settled, and that all such as shall oppose themselves against the same, or shall doe, or speake any thing in derogation or depraving of the said Divine Service, or Book of Common Prayer, may without any further tolleration or connivence undergoe the pains, punishment, and forfeiture due therefore; and that such care shall be taken, for Orthodox and peaceable men, Lecturers in all places, whose Doctrine may tend rather to sound instruction and edification, then lead to Schisme and Faction; All which we humbly submit to your great judgements, and shall pray to God to assist and direct you from above with his heavenly wisdom, to guide and bring all your consultations to happy conclusions.

To the High and Honourable Court of Parliament now sitting.

The humble Petition and Remonstrance of the Knights, Gentry, Clergy, Freeholders, and Inhabitants of the County of Somerset.

Delivered to the House of Peeres by the Lord Marquesse Harford, the 10. of December, 1641.

We humbly shew,

THat having with griefe of minde heard of sundry Petitions, which have been exhibited to this Right Honourable Assembly, by some of the Clergy and Laity about London, and some Countie, tending to the subversion of the Church-government established in this Kingdome; Wee therefore, considering the Peace and Welfare of both, doe in all humbleness presume to make knowne our Opinions and Desires concerning the same: Nothing doubting of the ke good acceptance of our humble *Petition and Remonstrance* in this behalfe, being endred with no lesse good affection to the Peace and Happinesse of the Church, the prosperity of His Sacred Majestie, and this whole Kingdome.

For the present government of the Church, we are most thankfull to God, believing it in our hearts to be the most pious and wisest, that any People or Kingdom upon earth hath been blest withall since the Apostles dayes: though we may not deny, but through the frailty of Men, and corruption of Times, some things of ill consequence, and other needlesse, are stollen, or thrust into it; which we heartily wish may be reformed, and the Church restored to its former purity. And to the end it may be the better preserved from present and future Innovation, We with the willingly and maliciously guilty, of what condition soever they be, (whether Bishops or inferior Clergy) may receive condigne punishment. But, for the miscarriage of overnours, to destroy the Government, we trust it shall never enter into the hearts of this wise and Honourable Assembly.

We will not presume to dispute the Right of *Episcopacy*, whether it be *Divine* or not; it sufficeth us to know that the *Church government* by Bishops is ancient, even as to the Apostles dayes: And that it hath pleased God from time to time, to make them most glorious instruments for the propagation and preservation of Christian Religion; which with their blood they have frequently sealed to posterity: And how much this Kingdome in particular is indebted to them, for the

these *Widdowes* and *Orphanes*, we trust shall never be forgotten. Our hearts desire therefore is, That the *Providence* may be separated from the *Policy*; that the bad may be rejected, and the good retained. Furthermore, having credibly heard that our *Common Prayer* hath been interrupted and despised of some mis-understanding or misled people, to the great scandal of the Religion professed in the Church; We humbly beseech you to take into your care the redresse thereof, as of an impiety not to be endured: As also to take order for the severe punishment of those men (if they may be discovered) who frequently publish Pamphlets, under a veyle of Religion, yet conducting to confusion and rebellion.

All which we humbly offer to your Widdomes, as the thoughts and desires of this *County*. And as we are perswaded of multitudes of the sound Members of the Church of England, and his Sacred Majesties most loyall Subjects,

Beseeching God, to direct and prosper your Counsels, and yet so pardon our Errors: We rest as your Commands:

Knights, Esquires, Dismen; Gentlemen, Free-holders; inhabitants of the County of Somersete (some of them Papists, but all Protestants of the Church of England) and his Majesties loyall Subjects.

Whereof *Knights, Esquires, and Gentlemen*—

Divines—

To the High and Honourable Court of PARLIAMENT;

The humble Petition of the *Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, and Householders, in the County of Rutland, in behalfe of our selves, and our Families.*

And of the *Parsons, Vicars, and Curats, for the Clergy, in behalfe of themselves, and their Families.*

Humbly shewing,

That whereas there have beene divers Petitions exhibited to this Honourable Court, by persons disaffected to the present Government, for the utter extirpation of the Apostolicall Government of the Church by Bishops; They by Tenuity and zeale, supplying the want of faire pretences for the abolition of that, which we hope no just reason can condemne: And on the other side, many pious persons true Sonnes of the Church of England, have represented their just desires of the continuance of it, upon great and weighty causes, both in Divinity, and true Policy; we also least we might seem unconcerned, and for feare least our silence should be exacted as a crime at our hands if we be deficient, to what we are perswaded is the cause of God; In pursuance of their pious intendments; and in allowance of their Reasons, doe also presse to your great Tribunal, or begge of you that which is the honour of Kings, to be *Nutrich* of the Church, and her most Ancient and Successiv Government.

We therefore humbly beg of you, to leave us in that state the Apostles left the Church in. That the three Ages of Martyrs were governed by; That the thirteene Ages since them have alwaies gloried in, (their Succession of Bishops from the Apostles, proving themselves members of the Catholike and Apostolike Church) that our Lawes have established, so many Kings and Parliaments have protested into which we were baptized; as certainly Apostolicall, as the observation of the Lords Day, as the distinctions of Books Apocryphall from Canonick, as that such Books were written by such Evangelists and Apostles, as the confistence of the Eucharist by Presbyters; as any thing which we doe by upholding the Government of the Church by Bishops, which we againe and againe begge you to do, having pity of our consciences, and not forcing us to seeke communion, as yet we know not where. So shall we be bound to pray with a multiplied Devotion, for the increase of publi

joined, which we hope you will favourably regard as to be a well known truth, and at least a confidence of duty, and charity to those our Fathers, from whom we have received, and daily hope to receive many effects of spiritual Blessings.

1. **W** B consider that Christ either left his Church without a Ruling Government, or else Bishops and Presbyters under them at that Government; the former we feare to say, lest we might seeme to accuse the Wilsdome of the Father of Impvidence, in the not providing for his Family; the Feeder and the Ruler in Scripture being all one in Office, in expression, in person; So that if he left no Rulers, he left no Feeders. The later we are more contented of, for that Christ did clearly institute a disparity in the Clergy, (which is the maine stone of offence) appears in the Apostles, and seventy two Disciples; to whom, according to the voyce of Christendome, and traditive interpretation of the Church, Bishops and Presbyters respectively do succeed, and also many actually did succeed the Apostles in their Chaires, being ordained Bishops by the Apostles themselves that did survive, and also beyond all exception that Christ did institute a Government, appears in those Evangelicall words 3.4.2. (who then is that Faithfull and wise Steward whom his Lord will make Ruler over his household, &c.) which Rulers are Bishops, and Priests under them; or else the Church hath become Apostate from her Lord, she having clearly for sixe hundred years had no other Rulers then such.

2. We consider that, whether it can be a Church or no without Bishops, is at least a question of great consideration, and a Negative is maintained by Apostolical and Primitive men, and Martyrs, and by the greatest part of Christendome; and those few (in respect of the whole) that dissent, being most certainly not infallible to be sure with Episcopacy; it may be a Church *extremis*, therefore it is the surest course to retain it, for feare we separate from the Church the pillar and ground of Truth.

3. No Ordination ever was without a Bishop, and if any Presbyter did impose hands, unlesse in conjunction with a Bishop, he was accounted an Usurper, and Anathematized by publicke and unquestioned Authority; and so without Bishops no Presbyter, then no absolution, no consecration of the Sacraments of the Lords Supper, and for these wants no man can make a recompence or satisfaction.

4. No Presbyter did ever impose hands on a Bishop, which if so famous a resolve, or publicke voyce of Christendome may have an estimate, shews their disparity, and that a Bishop hath a Character which cannot be imparted without at least an equal hand.

5. Without Bishops no Confirmation of children, and yet Confirmation (called in Scripture Imposition of hands) Saint Paulin his famous *Catechisme* accounts a Fundamental point, and the Church hath alwayes used it, and it was approbative to Bishops, by the laudable custome of Christendome, and by the example of the Apostles, in the case of the *Samaritanes* Christians, whom Philip the Evangelist had converted, and is charged upon the Parents of children, that they bring their children to Bishops to be confirmed, and it was never otherwise, but just as in the case of Ordination, (*vide licet*) by singularity and usurpation, till of late that the Iesuites to enlarge their *Provinceries*, have striven to make Bishops not necessary, by communicating Confirmation to the Priests of their Order.

6 To take away Bishops is against the wilsdome of the Church of England ever since the Reformation, and having been attempted by clancular practices, was checked by the Princes respectively, and their Councell, and confidently by the wilsdome of preceding Parliaments, and this although the Bishops then were lesse learned, and as much infamed.

any innovation, and we are in by what we
any innovation, and we are in by what we

9 We consider that if it could consist with Monarchy, when it was byassed by the Popes prevalent inroadment, much more since the Reformation, when the King hath the reins in his own hand, and can give them lawes, and ascertains them by their immediat dependence both for their Baronies, and Election, and personall Jurisdiction on the Crowne, and by the Statute of Submission.

10 We consider that Saint Hierome (pretended as the main Authoritick enemy against Episcopacy) yet sayes, That Bishops were constituted as an Antidote and defetory to dis-improve the illnes of Schisme, and that by the Apostles, who best knew the remedies. And now that Schismes multiply, there is more need of Bishops, so that they cannot be taken away, upon pretence their regiment is not necessary, for the taking them away makes them more necessary by the multiplication of the Schismes.

Comment.
Epist.
sum.

11 All learning will be discountenanced, if not extinguished, upon the demolition of Episcopacy, the Bishops being parties for the advancement of learning; and on the other side, if the government should be in the hands of Presbytery, or Lay-Elders, we know no reason sufficient to stifle our fowles, lest preferment be given to people unlearned and unfit to have the managing of foules, especially, since a learned Clergy will be suspected by their Lay-Elders, as too knowing to be ruled by their Dictates, which will not have so much artifice and suenesse as to command by strength of reason; which our fowles are also increased, by considering by the multiplication of Lay-Elders, or other governours, their personall interest being increased, partiality must be more frequent, and all this is besides their incompetency of judging the abilities of Schollers.

12 The removeall of Bishops would be a scandall, not onely to make weak Christians, who feare all Innovation, as guilty of some ill intendments upon their consciences, but also to the strongest, which shewes it to be the fault of the giver, not the weaknesse of the receiver; and if we must not scandalize our weak brethren, much lesse our strong; since this will intrench upon us in a high measure, they not being apt to be scandalized upon imbrages, and impertinencies.

13 Where Bishops are not, there is not an Honourable, but Family-like Clergy against the Apostlicall rule of double honour.

14 By putting down Episcopacy, we deprive our selves of those solemne benedictions, which the faith of Christendom, and the profession of the Church of England, enjoying the Bishop rather to pronounce the blessing at the end of the Communion, appropriates to Episcopall preheminance above priestly Authority.

15 Two parts of three of the Reformed Churches are governed by Bishops, or superintendents (which is properly the Latine word of Bishops) and the other part that wants them, as their own doctors do professe.

16 The first part of the three is the Church of England, and the other two are the Church of Scotland, and the Church of Geneva.

Charter, granted and confirmed by so many Kings, or about thirty Parliaments in expresse act, and the violation of any part of it by intrenchment upon the right of the Lay-subject, justly accounted a great grievance, the Charter itself being as fundamentall a law (as we conceive) as any other, and any of us may feare, lest his liberties may be next in question.

16 The four great generall Councils, in estimation next the four Evangelists, and by the statutes of the kingdome, made the rules of judging Heresies, were held by Bishops; the greatest fires and pests of Christendom, the old heresies, were by their industry extirpate; Church discipline, and pious constitutions by them established, many nations by them converted, many miracles done for the confirmation of Christian faith, one of the Gospels written by a Bishop (*S. Marke of Alexandria*) if we beleeeve as authentick Records as any are extant; Three Epistles of *S. Paul* written to Bishops; Seven Epistles by the Holy Ghost himselfe, recorded in the *Revelation*, and sent to seven *Asian* Bishops, as all Ancient Fathers accord; the names of twelve men, beside Apostles, mentioned in holy Scripture, which all antiquity reports to have bene Bishops. Most of the Fathers, whose Workes all posterity imbraces with much zeale and admiration, were Bishops; these also in our apprehensions advance that holy Function, to a high and unalterable estimate.

17 Very many of the fairest Churches and Colledges, and places of Religion, were built by Bishops; which are fair Characters to shew their promptnesse to do publike acts of Piety, and that persons so qualified as they were, that is, Governours and Clergy, and fairly endowed, is an excellent composition to advance publike designs for the honour of God in the promotion of publike Piety.

18 Since it hath pleased this Honourable Court, of late to command a Protestation to us, which we by solemne vow engaged our selves to attest with our lives and fortunes, the established Doctrine of the Church of *England*, we consider that since the 36 Article hath approved and established the Book of Consecration of Bishops, the abolition of Episcopacy would nullifie that Article, and should not we make humble Remonstrance to the contrary, wee should suddenly recede from our great and solemne Protestation for maintenance of our Church Doctrine.

But may it please this Honourable Assembly, we consider on the other side.

19 The introducing of Lay Elders, must needs bring an insupportable burthen to all Parishes, by maintaining them at the Parish charge: for they must be maintained, or else a transgression is made against an Apostolicall rule. For the principall, and indeed the onely colourable pretended place for Lay Elders, injoyne their maintenance: So that either the people must be oppressed with so great burthens, or else *S. Pauls* rule not obeyed, or els there is authority for no Lay Elders, as indeed there is not.

20 And also there can be lesse feare of Usurpation upon the Temporall power by the Presbytery, then is pretended from Episcopacy, since that Presbytery challenges cognisance of more causes and persons, then the Episcopacy does, (so making a dangerous entrenchment upon the Supremacy) and derives its pretence from divine institution, with more confidence, and more immediate derivation then Episcopacy, though indeed most vainly as wee conceive.

21 We crave leave also to adde this, that these

two viz. Episcopacy and Presbytery being the only two in contestation, if any new design should juggle Episcopacy, we are confident that as it hitherto wants a name, so it will want a face or forme of reason (in case of Conscience) when it shall appeare.

Signed by Knights, Iustices, Gentry and Free-holders, about : 800.

By Ministers, about the number of 40.

The Cheshire Petition for establishing of the Common-Prayer Book, and suppression of Schismatiques, presented to the Kings Majesty, and from him recommended to the House of Peeres, by the Lord Keeper.

To the Kings most excellent Majesty, and to the Right Honorable the Lords, and the Honorable the House of Commons assembled in

PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of divers of the Nobility, Justices, Gentry, Ministers, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants of the County Palatine of Cheshire, whose names are nominated in the Schedule annexed,

Your Petitioners with all cheerfulness and contentation, as-
sisting in the happy settlement of the distractions both of Church and State, by His Majesties pious care, and the prudent and religious endeavors of this Honorable Assembly, and with due humility and obedience, submitting to the unanimous conclusions thereof, yet conceive themselves bound in duty,

Humbly to represent to your mature considerations, that the present disorders of many turbulent and ill disposed spirits, are such, as give not only occasion of present discontent to your Petitioners, but seeme to import some ill event without early prevention.

The pure feed of our Faith (the Doctrine of the true Reformed Protestant Religion) established by so many Acts of Parliament, and to harmoniously concurring with the confessions of all other Reformed Churches, being tainted with the Tares of divers Sects and Schismes lately spring up amongst us,

Our pious, laudable and ancient forme of Divin Service, composed by the holy Martyrs, and worthy Instruments of Reformation established by the prudent Sages of State (Your Religious Predecessors) honored by the approbation of many learned forraign Divines, subscribed by the Ministry of the whole Kingdom, and with such generall content received by all the Laity, that scarce any family or person that can read, but are furnished with the Bookes of Common Prayer: In the conscionable use whereof many Christian hearts have found unspeakable joy and comfort, wherein the famous Church of England, our deare Mother, hath just cause to glory;

and may the long flourish in the practise of so blessed a *Liturgie*; yet it is now, not only depraved by many of those who should teach conformity to established Lawes, but in contempt thereof in many places wholly neglected. All these daily practised, with confidence, without punishment: to the great dejection of many sound Protestants, and occasioning so great insultation and rejoycing in some Separatists, as they not only seem to portend, but menace some great alteration; And not containing themselves within the bounds of civill government, do commit many tumultuous, (if not Sacrilegious) violences both by day and night upon divers Churches.

Therefore your Petitioners being all very apprehensive of the dangerous consequences of Innovation, and much scandalized at the present disorders,

Do all unanimously pray,

That there be admitted no Innovation of Doctrine or *Liturgie*, that holy publique Service being so fast rooted by a long settled continuance in this Church; that in our opinion and judgements it cannot be altered (unlesse by the advice and consent of some Nationall Synode) without an unrevocable discontent. And that some speedy course be taken to suppress such Schismatickes and episcopall, whose factious spirits do evidently endanger the peace both of Church and State.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

The Petition signed by Lords, Knights, Justices of the Peace, and Esquires, 94.

By Gentlemen of quality, 440.

By Divines, 86.

By Freeholders and others, in all 8936.

To the Kings most Excellent Maiesty, and to the High Court of Parliament.

The humble Petition of Colledges and Halls, and others, well-willers to

Piety and Learning, throughout the Kingdome of England.

Sheweth,

That whereas many Persons disaffected to the present forme of Government of the Church of England, (established not only by the Ecclesiasticall, but also by the Common Law of this Realme, and divers Acts of Parliament) have of late in great multitudes Petitioned this Honorable Court against the Orders, Honor, Jurisdiction, and meanes of the Cleargie; And have published such their desires in Print, and Pulpit, and dayly seeke to advance and propagate the same: To the great disheartning of all Learning, (if such designs find favour) the grievous scandall of the reformed Religion as unstable, and the unspeakable advantage of our Enemies of Rome.

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We therefore (well weighing, that the Seminaries must decay when the Garden shall be wasted) in all humility most heartily pray Your Majesty, and this honorable Court, that all the Orders of holy Church, of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, which from the Apostles times till these, have withstood so many Practices, may have yet hopes to flourish under Your gracious Protection. And that by your assistance, under our most Religious Sovereigne, the Ancient Catholike Faith, and Discipline, as also the devout and decent Service of God, in our Church Liturgie, may be defended from all Innovations, and Novelties : the Meanes and Liberties of the Churches, as well Cathedrall, and Collegiate, as Parochiall, to them hitherto of right belonging, according to the pious Wills of their blessed Founders, may be continued and preserved : Many thousand Families which on them depend, secured from ruine : and that our Nation, whose Lawes already favour as much as any in the world, the right of the first born may retain Ecclesiasticall Promotions, as the Patrimony of Younger Children, the prize of Labour and Study, an incitement of Learning, and a reward of those that can intitle themselves thereto by honest desert.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

This Petition is subscribed, generally by all the Doctors, Masters, and Batchelors of all degrees and faculties in the University of Oxford ; And by very many other Persons of quality : Baronets Knights, Esquires, Ministers, and Gentlemen, within the Countie of Oxford, Berks, Wilts, South-hampton, Dorset, Kent, Surrey, Westmerland, Cumberland, and other Shires.

Devonshire Petition, to the Right Honorable the Lords Spirituell and Temporall, Now assembled in the House of Parliament.

The humble Information and Petition, of the Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen, and others of ability, within the Dioces of Exeter.

WE whose names are underwritten, have for these many yeares, found the benefit and comfort of *Episcopall Government*, under which we have lived hitherto peaceably, and happily, with great freedom and frequency of the Preaching of the Gospell, and encouragement of the confectionable and painfull Preachers thereof. As we blesse God for his favour to us in this behalfe, so we do humbly and earnestly professe our desire that the same Government may be still continued both to us, and our posterity, submitting all personall offences, and redresse of abuses to your Honorable Widdomes.

In Witnesse whereof we have hereunto Subscribed.

Signed by Knights, Esquires, Gentlemen and other Inhabitants, near upon 8000

The *Staffordshire* Petition to the right Honorable the
Lords and Commons, assembled in the high
Court of Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Knights, Gentlemen Ministers, Freeholders, and other Inhabitants, within the County of Stafford, herunto subscribed.

Who most humbly pray,

That the present publike forme of Gods Worship, and Administration of the Blessed Sacrament, with other Rites agreeable to Gods holy Word, and purest Antiquity, which hath been formerly, sundry times established by godly Acts of Parliament, may now again in these broken and troubled times, be to Gods glory, and the Churches Peace, re-established, and confirmed.

That Episcopacy being the ancientest, and Primitive Government of the Church, renowned for successes, victorious against Schismes, and Heresies, and especially of late yeares, against that *Hydra* of Heresies, the Roman Papacy, glorious for Ancient and late Martyrdomes, happy before the corruption of Popery, and since the Reformation in the plantation, and preservation of Truth, and Peace; eminently serviceable to this Common-wealth, most complyable with the Civill Government (into the Fabricke, and body of which it is riveted, and incorporate) and most apt and easie at all times by the State to be reduced into Order, may for the future, as formerly, by your Great Authority be continued, and maintained for the glory of God, preservation of Order, Peace, and Vnity, the Reformation and suppression of wickedness and vice, and the mature prevention of Schismes, Factions, and Seditions. The which we, your humble Petitioners, the more earnestly beseech your Honors to grant, For that strong feares do possess our hearts, that the sudden mutation of a government so long settled, so well known, and approved, cannot recompence with any proportionable utility, the disturbances, and disorders which it may worke by novelty, being most confident, in your Honors Wisdome and Iustice, That all excessive exorbitances, and incroachments, which shall be found issuing, not from any poison in the nature of the Discipline, but rather from the infirmity, or corruption of the person (unto which the very best Government is subject) shall be duly regulated and corrected.

*And your Petitioners shall duly pray for
your Honors happiest proceedings.*

Subscribed by 3 000 of the best
quality of the Country.

To the Kings most Excellent Maieſty. And to the
Right Honourable the Lords and Commons
Aſſembled in Parliament.

The moſt humble Petition, of divers Baronets, Knights, Juſtices, Gentry, Miniſters, and Freeholders, Inhabitants of the County of Kent, within the Dioceſſe of Canterbury.

Moſt humbly ſhewing,

That notwithstanding this Kingdome, hath by the ſingular providence of Almighty God, for many yeares laſt paſt, happily flouriſhed above all other Nations in the Chriſtian World under the Religion and Government by Law eſtabliſhed: Yet hath it been of late moſt miſerably diſtracted through the ſiniſter practiſes of ſome private perſons ill affected to them both.

By whole meanes the preſent Government is diſgraced and traduced, the Houſes of God are prophaned, and in part deſaced, the Miniſters of Chriſt are contemned and deſpiſed, the Ornaments, and many Vtenſils of the Church are abuſed, the Liturgie and Booke of Common Prayer depraved, and neglected, that absolute modell of Prayer, *The Lords Prayer*, vilified, the Sacraments of the Goſpel in ſome places unduly Adminiſtered, in other places omitted, Solemne dayes of Faſting obſerved, and appointed by private perſons, Marriages illegally Solemnized, Burials uncharitably performed, and the very Fundamentall of our Religion ſubverted, by the publication of a new Creed, and teaching the Abrogation of the Morall Law. For which purpoſe, many offenſive Sermons are dayly preached; and many impious Pamphlets Printed, and in contempt of Authority, Many do what ſeemeth good in their own eyes, only as if there were no King, nor Government, in this our *Iſrael*.

Whereby Almighty God is highly provoked, his Sacred Maieſty diſhonored, the peace of the Kingdome endangered, the Conſciences of the people diſquieted, the Miniſters of Gods Word diſheartned, and the Enemies of the Church emboldned in their enterpriſes.

For redreſſe whereof, May it pleaſe this Great and Honorable Councell, ſpeedily to command a due obſervation of Religion and Government, by Law eſtabliſhed; in ſuch manner, as it may ſeeme beſt to the Piety and Wiſdome of his Royall Maieſty, and this Honorable Court.

Your Petitioners as they ſhall Conſidently expect a bleſſing from Heaven upon this Church and Kingdome, So ſhall they have this further cauſe to implore the Divines aſſiſtance upon this moſt Honorable Aſſembly.

Subſcribed by Knight Barronets, and Knights

Eſquires and Gentlemen of note, above

300.

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Divines

108.

Freeholders, and Subſide men,

800.

All within the Dioceſſe of Canterbury.

To



To the Honourable the Knights, Citizens,
and Burgesſes of the Houſe of COMMONS
aſſembled in PARLIAMENT.

The humble Petition of the Gentry, Cleargy, and others Inhabitants, Subſcribed, of the Counties of Flint, Denbigh, Montgomery, Carnarvan, Angleſey, Merioneth, being the ſixe Shires of Northwales.

As it was preſented this preſent March the 5, 1641, Accompanied with thirty thouſand hands.

VHereas the preſent condition of the Church of *England* (in the publike Liturgie thereof, in the ancient Liberties and forme of Government, as they do now ſtand eſtabliſhed by Law) hath been lately brought in queſtion, and manyfold Petitions from the ſeverall quarters of this Kingdom, and other ſuch like addreſſes concerning the ſame, have been preſented to this Honorable Houſe,

We his Maſtieſties faithfull Subjects in the Principalities and Counties of *North-wales* whom it equally concerneth, and as ſtrongly tyed in duty and conſcience, do likewise preſume to make our humble Remonſtrance, and we do it after a long ſilence and expectation joyned with ſome feares

And firſt, for thoſe things which concerne the publike Service of God, as they be of neereſt importance, and we nothing doubt, but you will take unto your tendreſt thoughts, ſo we do earneſtly propound and proſtrate and before you that dangerous conſequence of Innovation in matters of ſo high concernment, as we conceive, and leave it to your owne great Wiſdomes to Iudge, what ſcruples and jealousies are like to ariſe, if we be taught a new and different way of ſerving God, after a full perſwaſion of the lawfulneſſe of that which is preſcribed according to the Word of God, not without the deliberate, and concurrent approbation and induſtry of the moſt learned of the Proteſtant Church, of this and other Nations, and the poſſeſſion of ſo many yeares in the practiſe thereof, and all ſince the bleſſed time of Reformation.

The meere report hereof hath already produced no good effect, breeding in the mindes of ill-diſpoſed perſons Inſolence and contempt, in others

thers perplexity, and griefe, not knowing how to settle themselves, or forme their obedience in such distractions, and sometimes repugnancy of commands.

Then for the outward policy and forme of government, under the Iurisdiction of Bishops, bounded by Law, and kept within their owne limits.

It is as we beleeve, that forme which came into this *Island*, with the first Plantation of Religion here, and God to ble-ss this *Island*, that Religion came earely in, with the first dawning of the day, very neere, or in the time of the Apostles themselves, and in the Succession of all after Ages, the same hath been constantly maintained among us, and that without any eminent interruption, or gain saying, even till these our dayes.

And now from the comfortable experience which we feele, and which our Fathers have told us, of the conveniency and moderation of this Government, together with the Antiquity of the same (a strong argument of Gods speciall Protection.) We do in all humility represent and pray that the same may be still preserved entire in all the parts thereof, professing yet withall, that we heartily disclaime all Scandalous Innovation, and Popish corruption whatsoever,

And we are the more encouraged in this Suit, because we find it to be the unanimous and undevied request and Vote of this whole Countrey, who cannot without some trembling entertain a thought of change. In all which we do not presume to give any rules, but as it becomes us, humbly declare and open our own breasts, and labour to deliver our own soules in testimony of our Loyalties, and discharge of our Consciences, who shall ever take comfort to find the same way of honoring God; continued in his own House of Prayer, the Lawes of the Land put to a full execution, the Peace and Government of the Church preserved, the rumors alterations declined, and the distractions already too visible arising thereupon avoyded.

And as wee doubt not but your great Wisesomes will take care that our Doctrine and Discipline established, shall be still in force, and observed, untill by some absolute Law, and the opinions of learned Convocations, or Synod (according to the custome of our prudent fore-Fathers in best times) it be otherwise ordained.

So shall we never cease to pray for a permanent blessing upon your Counsels, and Resolutions, to the generall happinesse of Church and Kingdome.

To

To the Sacred Majestie, of our most Gracious
Soveraigne Lord King Charles: by the Grace
of God, of ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, FRANCE,
and IRELAND KING: *Defender*
of the Faith.

The humble Gratulation and Petition of divers of his
MAJESTIES faithfull Subjects (of the true Protestant
Religion) within the County *Palatine of Lancaster.*

Most Gracious Sovereigne,

THe most Reall and Convincingst testimonies of your Princely care,
for the advancement of Gods true Religion in your Majesties
Realmes: And the common good of your Subjects. Could no lesse than
draw from us, (who have hitherto in these stirring Times late still) this
humble acknowledgement of our due and necessary thanks.

We with the inmost and choicest thoughts of our soules, do esteeme
and prize your Majesties most righteous intentions, of governing your
liege people, according to the wholesome Laws of this Kingdom. A thing
so often, and with such earnestnesse avowed by your Sacred Majesty,
whereunto we yeeld that hearty credence, which is due to so religious a
Prince. We do also with all humility and thankfulness acknowledge
your manifold and evident manifestations (to the world) that you affect
not an Arbitrary Government, but the common prosperity, and happi-
nesse of all your loyall Subjects: By your readinesse to joyn with your
Parliament, in speedy rayling of forces for a timely suppression, of that
odious Rebellion in *Ireland*; by your late Proclamation for the putting
in due execution the Lawes against Papists. By your most gracious con-
descending to the desires of your great Councell, in signing the Bill for
the trienniall Parliament, for the Relinquishing your Title of imposing
upon Merchandize, and power of pressing Souldiers. For the taking a-
way the Starre-chamber, and High Commission Courts, for regula-
ting of the Councell Table: As also for the Bills for the Forrests and
Stannery Courts, with other most necessary Acts. Moreover we are confi-
dent, and well assured of Your Majesties zeale, for the advancement of the
true Protestant Religion. And with inexpressible joy do understand
Your most Christian and pious resolution, for the preservation of those
powerfull encouragements of Industry, Learning and Piety, the
meanes and honour of the Ministry, for the maintenance and con-
tinuance of our Church Government, and solemne Liturgy of the
Church

and learned of this Nation, and of other Countries; Composed (according to the Primitive pattern) by our blessed Martyrs and other Religious and learned men. As also your gracious pleasure, that all abuses of Church and State shall be reformed, according to the modell of Queen Elizabeths dayes, (of ever blessed and famous memory.) By the one you have weakened the hopes of the sacrilegious Devourers of the Churches Patrimony (if there be any such.) And by the other, provided against all Popish impieties and idolatries; and also against the growing danger of Anabaptists, Brownists, and other Novelists. All which Piety, Love, and Justice, we beseech God to return into your Royall bosome. But yet most gracious Sovereign, there is one thing that sadts our hearts, and hinders the perfection of our happinesse, which is the distance and misfunderstanding between Your Majesty and your Parliament, whereby the hearts of your Subjects are filled with feares and jealousies, Justice neglected, sacred Ordinances prophaned and trading impaired, to the impoverishing of many of your liege People. For the removall, whereof we cannot finde out any lawfull means without your Majesties assistance and direction.

Wherefore we humbly beseech Your most Excellent Majesty, to continue Your most Christian and pious Resolution of ruling Your people, according to the Laws of the Land, add maintaining of the same, of being a zealous Defender of the established Doctrine, Liturgie, and Government of our Church from Heresies, Libertinisme, and Profanesse; an advancer of Learning, Piety, and Religion; an encourager of Learned, Painfull, Orthodox Preachers. And whatsoever your Parliament shall offer to your Royall view, conducing to this blessed end, the common good and tranquillitie of your Subjects, to be pleased to condescend unto, and graciously to confirm, and withall to declare unto us some expedient way, how we may make a dutifull addresse unto Your Parliament, for the taking away of these differences and impediments, which stay the happy proceedings of that most honorable Assembly, (whereof your Majesty is the head) which once removed, we doubt not, but You will be as near your Parliament in Person, as in affection: That there may be a blessed harmony betwixt Your Highnesse, and that great Councell, we shal with all alacritie observe the same. Horribly rendering our lives & fortunes for the preservation of Your Royall Person, Crown, and Dignity, according to our bounden duty, and allegiance. And heartily praying for Your Majesties long and prosperous Reign over us.

We the Subscribers of this Petition, do hereby give authority, unto the Bearers hereof, to put our names to such Transcript hereof, as shall be presented to His Majesty.

To the Kings most Excellent Majestie.

The humble Petition of the Countie of Cornwall.

WE your Majesties loyall Subjects, in all duty render unto Your Majesty all thankfulness, for Your Majesties unexampled favour and Grace, in granting unto your Subject (in concurrence with Your Parliament) such Laws and freedoms, which have most fully expressed Your Majesties gracious Goodnesse unto your people. And doe most thankfully receive Your Majesties free offer of a generall Pardon, whereof we most humbly desire to be made partakers. And we most humbly beseech Your Majesty, never to suffer your Subjects to be governed by an Arbitrary Government, nor admit an alteration in Religion. And your Petitioners being most feelingly grieved for Your Majesties discontents; partly occasioned by divers scandalous Pamphlets, and no way lessened by seditious Sermons. Do with a confluence of all comforts, honour, and happinesse unto Your Majesty: And do heartily pray for the reconcilment betwixt Your Majesty, and Your Parliament. And in all thankfulness for Your Majesties said Grace and Goodnesse: Your Petitioners do offer themselves most ready to maintain, and defend with their lives and fortunes, Your Sacred Person, Honour, and Estate, and lawfull Prerogative against all persons whatsoever, according to the oathes of Allegiance and Supremacie. *May 22. 1642.*

Endorsed,

We the Petitioners to this Petition, do constitute and appoint Peter Courtney, Walter Langdon, Benatus Bellot, and Nevill Bligh, Esquiers, to deliver this Petition, in the name of the Countie of Cornwall, to His Sacred Majesty.

To the Honorable House of Commons assembled in Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Gentry, Ministers, and Commonalty of the Countie of Kent, agreed upon, at the generall Assizes of the Connty.

Most humbly sheweth,

THAT we cannot but take notice how welcome to this Honorable House many Petitions have been, which yet came not from an assembled Bodie of any Countie (as this doth) we do therefore hope to finde as gentle and favourable a reception of this, as any other have found of their Petitions, our hearts witnessing unto us, as good, peaceable, and pious purposes as the best.

These

These are therefore the true and Ardent desires of this County.

1. That you will be pleased to accept our due and hearty thanks for those excellent Lawes (which by his Majesties grace and goodnesse) you have obtained for us.

2. That all Lawes against Papists be put in due execution and an account taken of their disarming, and that all children of the Papists may be brought up in the reformed Religion.

3. That the solempne *Liturgy* of the Church of England (Celebrious by the piety of the Bishops and Martyrs who composed it) establisht by the supreme laws of this Land, attested and approved by the best of all Forraigne Divines; confirmed by the subscription of all the Ministry of this Land, A Clergy as able and Learned as any in the Christian world ere enjoyed, and with a holy love embraced by the most and best of all the Laity, that this holy exercise of Religion may by your Authority be enjoyned quiet and free from interruptions, scorus, prophaneesse, threats and force of Incubitors, who daily do deprave it, and neglect the use of it in divers Churches in despite of the Lawes established.

4. That Episcopall Government, as Ancient in this Iland as Christiandity it self, deduced and dispersed throughout the Christian world, even from the Apostolicall times, may be preserved (as the most pious, most prudent, and most safe government) for the peace of the Church.

5. That all differences concerning Religion and Ceremonies may be referred to a lawfull, free, and Nationall Synod, as your Remonstrance promisseth, to a generall Synod of most grave, learned, pious and Judicious Divines (the proper Agents) whose interests, gifts, and callings, may quicken them in that great Work, whose choyce to be by all the Clergy of the Land, because all the Clergy are to be bound by their Resolutions, and the determination of this Synod to binde us all, when you have first formed them into a Law and this we take to be according to the ancient and fundamentall Law of the Land, confirmed by *Magna Charta*.

6. That some speedy and good provision may be made (as by his Majesty hath been and is by all good men desired) against the odious and abominable scandall of schismaticall and sedicious Sermons and Pamphlets and some severe Law made against Lay-men, for daring to arrogate to themselves and to execute the holy function of the Ministry, who (some of them) sow their impious and discontented Doctrine, even in Sacred places by abuse of Sacred Ordinances, to the advancing of Heresie, Schisme, Prophaneesse, Libertisme, Anabaptisme, and Atheisme.

7. That if the coercive power of Ecclesiasticall Courts by way of Excommunication be already abrogated, or shall be thought fit so to be, that

there be some other power and authority freely established, for suppressing the heynous, and now so much abounding sins of Irceit, Adultery, and Fornication, and other crimes, and for recovering Tythes, repaying of Churches, Probate of Wills, Church Assesses, providing Bread and Wine for the Communion, and choice of Church-Wardens and other Officers in the Church, and especially for Ministers, who neglect the Celebrating of the Holy Communion, and the Parishioners for not Receiving.

8. That the Professors of that Learned faculty of the Civil Law, and (without which this Kingdom cannot but suffer manifold Inconveniencies) may not finde discouragements, and so divert their Studies and Professions.

9. That Honour and profits the powerfull encouragements of Industry, Learning and Piety, may be preserved without further diminution to the Clergy.

10. That you please sadly to consider the bleeding wounds of our Brethren in *Ireland*, and with speedy succours endeavour to preserve them, whereunto his Majesty hath promised a gracious concurrence.

11. That you please to frame an especial Law for the Regulating of the *Militia* of this Kingdom, so that the Subject may know how at once to obey, both His Majesty and both Houses of Parliament, a Law whereby may be left to the discretion of Governours as little as may be, but that the number of Armes and what measure of punishment shall be inflicted upon the offenders, may be expressly set down in the Act, and not left to any Arbitrary power, and that according to the precedent of former Laws the offenders may not be tryed out of the county.

12. That the precious Liberty of the Subject (the common birth-right of every *English-man*) may be as in all these poynts preserved entire, so in this also, that no order of either of both Houses, not grounded on the Laws of this Land, may be enforced on the Subject, till it be fully enacted by Parliament.

13. That his Majesties gracious Message of the 20. of *Jan.* last, for the present and future establishment of the Priviledges of Parliament the free enjoying of our estates and Fortunes, the Liberty of our persons, the security of the true Religion professed, the maintaining of his Majesties just and Regall Authority, the establishing his Revenue, may be taken into speedy consideration; the effecting whereof, will satisfie the desires of all us, his faithfull and loving Subjects.

14. That all possible care may be taken, that the Native Commodities of this Kingdome may have a quick Vent, and that cloathing and other Manufactures may be improved, wherein the livelihood of many thousands

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land do consist and that trade may be ballanced that the importation do not
exceed the exportation otherwise it will prove a consumption of the Land.

15. That you please to frame some Lawes concerning Depopulations,
Purveyances, Cart-taking, delays in justice, Wraitches, Fishing in the Coasts,
Fulling earth, that our Sea-Ports may be repayed & our Magazines renewed.

16. That you please to consider the generall poverty that seems to over-
gloom this Kingdom.

17. Lastly, We humbly beseech you to consider the sad condition that we
and the whole Land are in, it's good under standing be not speedily removed
between his Majesty and both Houses of Parliament.

Our hopes are yet above our fears, secure them, we beseech you God direct
and guide your consultations for the removing of all distrusts and Jealousies,
for the renewing that tye of confidence and trust, (which is the highest hap-
pinesse) between our gracious Prince and his loving Subjects.

And you shall have the daily prayers of your humble Orators of the Com-
munity of Kent.

To the Honorable the Knights, Citizens, and Burgesites of the
House of Commons assembled in Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Baronets, Knights Esquiers, Gentlemen, Clergy-
men, Free-holders, Subsidy-men, and others of good Rank and Qualitie
in the County of Oxford.

Agreed upon and subscribed at the times of their meetings, to take the
Protestation sent unto them.

Humbly shewing

That whereas some petitions have beene exposed in print to common
view, under the names of the Knights, Gentle-men, Free-holders, Sub-
sidie-men of the best Ranke and quality of the County of Oxford, as prefer-
red to the Honorable House of Parliament.

We do hereby crave leave, to shew to this honorable House, that such peti-
tions have not received publique Examination among us at any generall
meeting directed by Authority, for the service of the County.

And we your now Petitioners knowing our selves to be the Major part
of those degrees within this County, and as desirous to express our
Gratitude in this Honourable House, for your unwearyed labours, and the
happy effects thereof, for the good of this Land and State; do hereby offer
up in all humility, the greatest expression of our Thankfulness; and in like
manner, our unanimous desires.

That the *Government* of this Church may continue, as is now by Law established: And that the *Liturgy* may be settled with such alterations (if there be cause) as your *Wisdomes* shall approve.

That the *Laws* against *Papists* which oppose our *Religion*, and against *Sectaries* (of late dangerously increased among us) that trouble the *Peace* thereof, may be put in full execution: And where those *Laws* are defective, such further remedy therein may be provided, as to your *wisdomes* shall seem fit.

That a free *Synod* of *Orthodox* and peaceable *Divines* may be convened, according to the forme of the *Primitive*, and Purest times of *Christianity*, for composing of all differences in *Doctrine*, and *Ceremonies of Religion*.

That the *Safety* of this County and Kingdom may be provided for by the disposing of such a *Militia*, as may consist with the native *Liberties* of the *Subject*.

That you would be pleased to continue your *Care* in hastening the further *Reliefe* of our distressed Brethren in *Ireland*.

And your *Petitioners* shall be ready to maintaine, with their *Lives* and *Estates*, his *Majesties* Person, Honour, and Estate, together with the *Rights* and *Priviledges* of *Parliament*.

And your Petitioners shall ever pray, &c.

To the Most Honourable and High Court of Parliament.

The humble Petition of the Gentlemen, and other of the inhabitants of the County of Cornwall.

HAVING seen and heard the many (though scarce divers) *Petitions* to this Honourable Assembly, by the *Inhabitants* of divers Counties and *Cities* of this Land, as also *Corporations*, *Companies*, and *Trades*, some against *Bishops*, some against the *Common Prayer*, and all against such *Judiciall*, and things *Super-elementary* to the region of their capacity of judging, and matters only belonging to the *Judicature* of this grave *Synod* which seems either to distrust, or direct, or both, your great *Wisdomes*; We therefore the *Gentlemen*, and other the *Inhabitants* of *CORNWALL*, with as many hearts, though not hands, with as many good wills, though not persons, not in imitation, but rather by provocation, and necessity, in these times, to shew our good minded affections, do humbly prostrate the utmost of our service to your feet. In which (or rather after which) we take leave humbly to beg,

That you will be pleased to bend your auxiliary and good affections to the redresse of the distresse of the miserable *Protestants* in *Ireland*.

To

To gain whole good, prosperity, peace, and tranquillity, to preserve due Sovereignty of that Land to our Royall King, and to maintain His, and this Kingdoms Honour, We shall willingly lay down our lives and fortunes.

That you will be pleased to continue your great respect, dutifull loves and true obedience to our Royall Sovereign, by maintaining his just and no way Antilegall Prerogative.

That you will be pleased to put the Laws in due execution against all Jesuits, Seminaries, Papiſts, and Recusants.

That you will be pleased to look upon the other ſide, and duly weighing the actions (or rather factions) of some, (whom most men call Citizens) to scourge their irregular and disorderly Schisme, and Hereticall Sects, into right paths of serving God, to frequent his House, and to pray as we have heard; to allow Order, and obey Conformity, to reverence Learning, and bow to Authority, to be under a Discipline, and live in order.

That you will be pleased to maintain and establish the Ancient, Fundamental, and most venerable Lawes, Order, and Discipline, both of our Church, and Common-wealth; to continue the revered Office, and punish the offending persons of Bishops, to have in high account, and eternize (as far as in you lies) the Divine and excellent forme of Common-Prayer, to correct brain-forged doctrine, by your exemplary precepts, strike a Reverence of Gods House into every mans breast.

That you will be pleased to intimate unto the people, your Honourable and wise intentions concerning Divine Service, lest while you hold your peace, some rejecting it in part, others altogether, they vainly conceive you countenance them.

* Lastly? (not to trouble your great affairs any longer.) That you will be pleased to take into your Sage consideration, those scandalous and ill affected Pamphlets, which flye abroad in such swarms, as are able to cloud the pure ayre of Truth, and present a darke ignorance to those, who have not the two wings of Justice and knowledge to flye above them.

Now to polish this our work with a smooth demonstration of our modest intents, that the tinsures which in Introduction fell on the forementioned presents, may slide without a stain from this; We do in all humility declare, that neither distrust of your intentions, nor opinion of any of our counsels worthy your ears ever crossed our thoughts, but that we have still been, and are confident, that this most wise Synod hath ever thought fit, resolved and will confirm into action, what we humbly request; therefore this our present, not so much a Petition, as a prayer of willing and thankful hearts, for the hoped sequell, is only to shew our true intentions, and good will towards his gracious Majesty, and this High Court, as instruments

of

unanimously resolved to spend our dearest blood
Published by J. B. Gent.

To the Right Honorable the Lords and Commons assembled
in the High Court of Parliament.
The humble Petition of the Knights, Esquiers, Gentlemen, Ministers, Free-
holders, and other Inhabitants within the County of Hereford.

Who most humbly pray,

That the present publique form of Gods worship, and the administration
of the blessed Sacraments, with other Rights agreeable to Gods holy
Word, and purest Antiquities, which have been sundry times established by
godly Acts of Parliament, may now again in these broken and troubled times,
be to Gods glory, and the Churches peace, re-established and confirmed;
That Episcopacy being the ancient and primitive government of the Church,
Renowned for Successes, Victorious against Schismes, and Heresies, and especi-
ally, of late years against that Hydra of Heresies, the Roman Papacy, Glori-
ous for ancient and late Martyrdoms, happy before the corruption of Popery,
and since the Reformation in the plantation and preservation of Truth and
peace, eminently serviceable to this Common-wealth, most compliable with
the civill Government, into the Fabrick and body of which, it is riveted and
incorporated, and most apt and easie at all times, by the State to be reduced
into Order, may for the future (as formerly) by your great Authority be
continued and maintained, for the glory of God, the preservation of Order,
peace, and Unity, the Reformation and suppression of wickednesse a device,
and the mature prevent on of Schismes, Factions, and Seditions, That Ca-
thedralls, the Monuments of our Forefathers charity, the reward of present
Literature and furtherance of Pietie, be also continued.

The which way our humble Petitioners the more earnestly beseech your
Honors to grant; for that strange fears do possesse our hearts, that the sud-
den mutation of Government so long settled, so well known and approved;
cannot recompence the disturbances and disorders which it may work by
Novelty with any proportionable utility: being most confident in your Ho-
nors, Wisdoms and Justice, that all Excesses, Exorbitancies, and Encroach-
ments, as shall be found issuing, not from any poison in the nature of the
Discipline, but, rather, from the infirmity and corruption of the persons
(into which the very best Government is subject) shall be duly regulated
and corrected.

And your Petitioners shall pray, &c.

Subscribed by Knights, Esquiers, and Gentlemen of quality, 68. Doctors 8.
Ministers of good repute, as well appear by the Original petitions, 130.
Freeholders and Inhabitants of the County of Hereford, 3600.

